



1850-1865

Before and the Civil War



The Seeds of War

The Civil War was inevitable as the collision between the Northern and Southern States philosophies and beliefs were out of sync with each other. Slavery was abolished as an institution in the Northern States since 1804. Although abolition was not immediate in most states, it did evolve through local laws over the years. [PBS.org](https://www.pbs.org) Toward the end of the 1840s, the Abolitionists wanted the outright ban on Slavery. Southern plantations needed the cheap labor to meet the demand for cotton. Congress had tried for a long time to balance the issue of slavery as territories petitioned for statehood. One result was the Mason-Dixon Line. States above this demarcation were to be free while the states below would retain slavery. California's petition for statehood threw a monkey wrench into the works. The divisions between the North and South were growing.

Compromise of 1850

In September 1850, five laws were passed by Congress dealing with enslavement.

- Permitted slavery in Washington, D.C., but outlawed the slave trade
- Added California to the Union as a “free state”
- Established Utah and New Mexico as territories that could decide via popular sovereignty if they would permit slavery
- Defined new boundaries for the state of Texas following the Mexican-American War, removing its claims to parts of New Mexico but awarding the state \$10 million in compensation
- The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 required citizens to assist in apprehending runaway slaves and denied enslaved people a right to trial by jury.

Major Events from 1850 to 1865

- 1852 Harriet Beecher Stowe publishes *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Franklin Pierce elected president.
- 1853 Gadsden Purchase negotiated.
- 1854 Congress passes Kansas-Nebraska Act (Created Kansas and Nebraska Territories. It allowed citizens in Kansas and Nebraska to decide to allow slavery or not). Republican Party forms.
- 1856 Border ruffians burn the town of Lawrence, Kansas. Pottawatomie Massacre, Charles Sumner attacked in the Senate. James Buchanan elected president

Major Events from 1850 to 1865

- 1857 Buchanan accepts Lecompton Constitution (to admin Kansas as a slave state). Supreme Court issues *Dred Scott v. Sanford* decision (overturns Missouri Compromise). The Panic of 1857.
- 1858 Congress rejects Lecompton Constitution. Lincoln and Douglas debate slavery in Illinois (brings Lincoln into National prominence).
- 1859 John Brown raids Harpers Ferry, Virginia.
- 1860 Abraham Lincoln elected president. South Carolina secedes from the Union
- 1861 Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas secede. Jefferson Davis becomes president of the Confederate States of America. Lincoln delivers his first inaugural address. South Carolina seizes Fort Sumter. Arkansas, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia secede from the Union.

Major Events from 1850 to 1865

The acts of 1850, 1852, and 1855 granted bounty-land warrants for service in all Indian wars fought from 1790 up to the beginning of the Civil War. This included bounty-land warrants acts for the Revolutionary War (1788, 1803, 1806, and 1855), War of 1812 (1811/1812, 1842, 1850, 1852, and 1855), and the Mexican-American War (1847).

Bounty-land warrant files can contain supporting documents such as statements and signatures of witnesses. Bounty-land warrants generally do not contain as much personal information as the pensions. The Government ceased issuing bounty-land-warrants after 1855.

More information on Enslavement can be found here. National Park Service:

<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/enslavement/index.htm>

History.com:

<https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/slavery>

The Presidential Election of 1860

The 1860 Presidential Election was the straw that broke the camel's back and leading to the outbreak of the Civil War. There were not just two Presidential Candidates, but four.

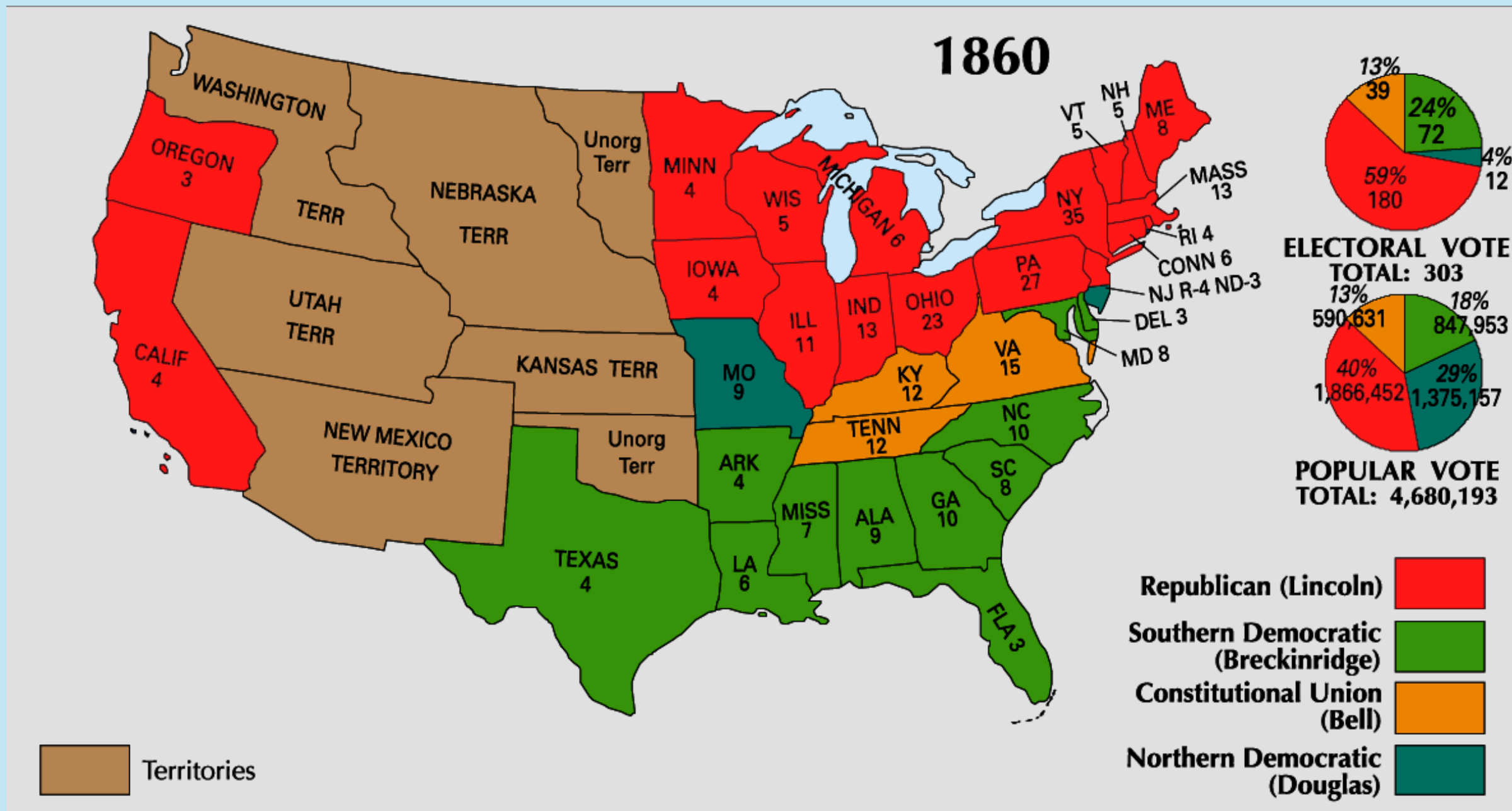
The candidates were Abraham Lincoln (Republican Party), John C Breckinridge (Southern Democratic Party), John Bell (Constitutional Union Party), and Stephen A Douglas (Northern Democratic Party).

The outcome as we know from history is Abraham Lincoln won the election of 1860, but with only 39.8% of the popular vote and 180 of the 303 electoral votes (152 electoral votes to win). Obviously, the southern states needed a pro-slavery candidate to remain viable.

The South up to the 1860s had produced two-thirds of the US Presidents.

The Presidential Election of 1860

- However, the Republican plank had promised not to interfere with slavery in the states, but suggested an opposition to slavery in the territories. The platform promised tariffs protecting industry and workers, a [Homestead Act](#) granting free farmland in the West to settlers, and the funding of a [transcontinental railroad](#).
- There was **no mention** of Mormonism (which had been condemned in the Party's 1856 platform), the [Fugitive Slave Act](#), personal liberty laws, or the [Dred Scott decision](#).^[7] While the Seward forces were disappointed at the nomination of a little-known western upstart, they rallied behind Lincoln.
- Abolitionists, however, were angry at the selection of a moderate and had little faith in Lincoln.



(Source: [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Presidential_Election_of_1860), United States Presidential Election of 1860)

Reasons leading to the Civil War

Now the stage is set. The North saw slavery as the main issue. The South believed the war was over the reach of the Federal Government into the rights of the individual States. Either way, Slavery, and economics are so tightly woven you could not separate the issues to say one over the other drove the nation to war.

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“The reality is there were many factors that contributed to the failure of diplomacy resulting in bloodshed and hardship on a scale never before seen by this nation as a percentage of the population. The North fought for the preservation of the Union (primary) as well as to free the slaves (secondary). Likewise, the reality is the majority of the "State's Rights" fought for by the South revolved around the "peculiar institution" of Slavery, especially as property. In this section are documents and resources providing insight into the various topics which led to the political disagreements, disagreements which the bounds of compromise failed to contain.

<https://www.civilwar.com/overview/causes.html>

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Beginning with the protection of slavery as an institution provided for in the United States Constitution, the debate ranged back and forth from the right of an individual to be free once outside the boundary of a slave-holding state, the definition of a person as property, the right to take said "property" to territories of the United States not yet formed as States, etc. Involved in these debates were economic policy, legislative representation as voting power, religion, State's Rights, sectionalism, etc.”

Civil War

South Carolina secedes from the Union December 20, 1861, after the election of Abraham Lincoln. Six more states (Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana and Texas) would follow within 2 months. Lincoln is sworn on March 4, 1861, as the 16th President of the United States. Opening shots are fired at Fort Sumter by the Confederate Army, April 12, 1861. Virginia, Tennessee, Arkansas, and North Carolina secede to form the eleven state Confederate States of America. See the following timeline for the Civil War.

<http://www.historyplace.com/civilwar/>

Outcome

The outcome would be 620,000 to 750,000 soldiers dead out of 3.2 million (both sides), the collapse of the Confederacy, 4 million slaves freed, the southern economy shattered, and the southern infrastructure destroyed.

Technology as a result of the Civil War

New technology would be deployed including:

- Communications and Transport.
- Telegraph.
- Aerial reconnaissance. (hot air balloons)
- Railroads.
- Army ambulance corps.
- Weapons and Ships. (USS Monitor, CSS Virginia, CSS Hunley – submarines, torpedoes, naval mines)
- Long-Range Weapons and the Minnie Ball Bullet.
- The Gatling gun.
- <http://www.pbs.org/opb/historydetectives/feature/civil-war-innovations/>

Military Leaders

Union Generals	Confederate Generals
Ulysses S. Grant	Robert E Lee
George McClellan	Stonewall Jackson
William Tecumseh Sherman	J.E.B. Stuart
George Meade (Gettysburg)	Nathan Bedford Forrest
Robert Anderson (Fort Sumter)	James Longstreet
George Custer	Braxton Bragg
Winfield Scott Hancock	George Pickett

Civil War Battles

The Civil War locations and battles are too numerous to be listed. The North typically named battles after landmarks where the South named their battles after towns. One example is the “Battle of Antietam and Second Battle of Bull Run” referred to by the North. The South called them “Battles of Sharpsburg and Manassas”.

- List of American Civil War Battles (Wikipedia): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_American_Civil_War_battles
- The National Park Service - CWSAC Battle Summaries (The American Battlefield Protection Program): <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/2287/index.htm>
- <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/battlefields/index.htm>
- National Archives: <https://www.archives.gov/research/military/civil-war>

Civil War Prison Camps

Being a prisoner was not for the faint of heart. Typically, poor living conditions and poor food meant a lot of suffering. The prison exchange system called for equal exchanges of all soldiers captured, and not to take up arms until they were formally exchanged. However, with the enlistment of black soldiers, the South refused to acknowledge the equal treatment of black soldiers and said black soldiers were not subject to the prisoner exchange. By 1863, President Lincoln suspended the prisoner exchange until the Confederacy agreed to treat black soldiers the same as white soldiers. (Prisoner Exchange:

<https://www.nps.gov/ande/learn/historyculture/grant-and-the-prisoner-exchange.htm>)

Prison Camps

American Civil War prison camps:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Civil_War_prison_camps

Civil War Trust: <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/civil-war-prison-camps>

Civil War Prisoner Records:

National Park Service database (Fort McHenry, Baltimore and Andersonville): <https://www.nps.gov/civilwar/search-prisoners.htm>

Confederate Prisoner of War Records (FamilySearch Wiki):

https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Confederate_Prisoner_of_War_Records

Ancestry.com (Subscription or Library):

<http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=1124>

Civil War Prisons (Andersonville database search):

<http://www.civilwarprisoners.com/search.php?database=andersonville>

Where are they?

Confederate Pension Records – National Archive’s State List of where to find them. <https://www.archives.gov/research/military/civil-war/confederate/pension.html>

Sons of Confederate Veterans – A list of resources <http://www.scv.org/>

National Park Service – Civil War

<http://www.nps.gov/civilwar/index.htm> NPS Soldiers and Sailors

Database. Search our database of more than 6.3 million records to find your family member. Look under “People” on the left side menu for a list of resources. (**Both Confederate and Union Forces**)

The VA website - http://www.cem.va.gov/burial_benefits/

The **Nationwide Grave Locator** (National Cemeteries like Santa Fe, etc.) is on the left side menu plus other information for veterans.

The **National Archives** does not hold state militia records. For these records, you will need to contact the appropriate [State Archives](#).

<https://www.archives.gov/research/alic/reference/state-archives.html>

Fold3 (Free with ABQ Library Card) - <https://www.fold3.com/>

Search for “Civil War Records” on **Cyndi’s List** -

<http://www.cyndislist.com/>

Enslavement

Heinonline (Registration Required) – Slavery in America

<http://heinonline.org/HOL/Index?collection=slavery>

The Freedman Bureau Online -

<http://www.freedmensbureau.com/>

**Family Search Wiki - African American Freedmen's Bureau
Records**

https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/African_American_Freedmen%27s_Bureau_Records

Other Free Sites:

- [FamilySearch](#) Free access to one of the largest non-profit databases of genealogical records from all over the world. Sponsored by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
- [US GenWeb Project \(all states\)](#) Free genealogy and family history online made possible by the USGenWeb Project volunteers. Search free genealogy websites for your ancestors
- [US GenWeb Project - New Mexico](#) Compiles research on New Mexico genealogy, and also provides an opportunity to post questions and exchange information with fellow researchers.

More Sites

- [Cyndi's List](#) A comprehensive, categorized & cross-referenced list of links that point you to genealogical research sites online.
- [US National Archives](#) & <https://aad.archives.gov/aad/index.jsp>
- [Rootsweb](#) Free genealogy site affiliated with Ancestry.com. The primary purpose of RootsWeb.com was to connect people so they can help each other and share genealogical research.
- [Hathi Trust Digital Library](#) HathiTrust is a [partnership](#) of academic & research institutions, offering a collection of millions of titles digitized from libraries around the world.

New Mexico – Civil War Records

- **Family Search Wiki:**

[https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/New_Mexico,_Civil_War_Service_Records_of_Union_Soldiers_\(FamilySearch_Historical_Records\)](https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/New_Mexico,_Civil_War_Service_Records_of_Union_Soldiers_(FamilySearch_Historical_Records))

- **Random Acts of Genealogical Kindness Website:**

<https://www.raogk.org/newmexico-genealogy/nm-military-records/>

- **Research Online – Search the New Mexico Soldiers Index:**

<http://www.researchonline.net/nmcw/search/searchnm.php>

What have we learned!

3.2M soldiers fought in the Civil War (both sides)

Up to 750,000 soldiers died.

Enslavement abolished and 4 Million Enslaved were freed.

Reconstruction of the South would last over a decade.

Racism and Bigotry still exists.

It would still take over 100 years for Congress to pass “The Civil Rights act of 1964”.